

1. Pfeiffer: “It will hardly be possible to discern the real image of Sophistic interpretation through these malicious and amusing Socratic distortions <in *Protagoras* 340-47>; but if we catch a likeness of the ‘historic’ Protagoras at the beginning of his own discussion (339 A ff.), that passage is quite sufficient to show that he was not aiming at the true reading and meaning of the Simonidean text; the criticism of the wording and sense in which he displays his own superiority is regarded as useful for the discipline of the mind of his pupils. It is this educational value which the Platonic Socrates most emphatically denies at the end (347 C ff.)” (*History of Classical Scholarship* 1968:34)

2. *Protagoras* 339a1-3: ‘It is my view, Socrates,’ Protagoras said, ‘that a very great part of education for a man is to be skilled (*deinos*) at poetry. This consists in (1) being able to understand the correctness or incorrectness in the compositions of the poets and (2) knowing how to analyze them and (3) how to defend one’s analysis when questioned.’

Ἡγοῦμαι, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκράτες, ἐγὼ ἀνδρὶ παιδείας μέγιστον μέρος εἶναι περὶ ἐπῶν δεινὸν εἶναι· ἔστιν δὲ τοῦτο τὰ ὑπὸ τῶν ποιητῶν λεγόμενα οἷόν τ’ εἶναι συνέναι ἅ τε ὀρθῶς πεποιήται καὶ ἅ μὴ, καὶ ἐπίστασθαι διελεῖν τε καὶ ἐρωτώμενον λόγον δοῦναι.

3. Aristotle, *Soph. el.* 14. 173b17 [DK A28]: One can seem to commit a solecism without doing so and actually commit one without seeming to, as Protagoras said, on the assumption that ‘wrath’ and ‘helmet’ are really masculine nouns. For someone saying ‘accursed’ [*oulomenēn* (f.)] <wrath> commits a solecism, according to him, although he doesn’t seem to to other people, while someone saying ‘accursed [*oulomenon* (m.)] <wrath>’ seems to but doesn’t actually commit a solecism.

(σολοικισμός) ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο καὶ ποιεῖν καὶ μὴ ποιῶντα φαίνεσθαι καὶ ποιῶντα μὴ δοκεῖν, καθάπερ ὁ Π. ἔλεγεν, εἰ ὁ μῆνις καὶ ὁ πῆληξ ἄρρεν ἔστιν· ὁ μὲν γὰρ λέγων ‘οὐλομένην’ σολοικίζει μὲν κατ’ ἐκεῖνον, οὐ φαίνεται δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις, ὁ δὲ ‘οὐλόμενον’ φαίνεται μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὐ σολοικίζει. Cf. *Rhet.* Γ 5. 1407b 6.

4. Aristotle, *Poet.* 19. 1456b15 [DK A29]: For who would think that Homer was mistaken in the phrase Protagoras criticizes him for, when he thinks that he is praying but used a command: “Sing, goddess, the wrath...” For, he says, to order someone to do or not do something is a command.

τί γὰρ ἂν τις ὑπολάβοι ἡμαρτησθαι ἅ Π. ἐπιτιμαῖ ὅτι εὐχέσθαι οἰόμενος ἐπιτάττει εἰπὼν ‘μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά’; τὸ γὰρ κελεύσαι, φησί, ποιεῖν τι ἢ μὴ, ἐπιταξίς ἐστιν. Cf. Diogenes Laertius IX.53-54.

5. Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1247-51 (Strepsiades vanquishes his first creditor with technical grammar):

S: ποῦ 'σθ' οὗτος ἀπαιτῶν με τὰργύριον; λέγε τουτί τί ἐστι; C: τοῦθ' ὅ τι ἐστί; κάρδοπος.	S: Where's the guy who's demanding the money from me? Tell me, what's this? C: That? A mortar.
S: ἔπειτ' ἀπαιτεῖς τὰργύριον τοιοῦτος ὢν; οὐκ ἂν ἀποδοῖην οὐδ' ἂν ὀβολὸν οὐδενί, ὅστις καλέσειε κάρδοπον τὴν καρδόπην.	S: And you're demanding money, after an answer like that? I wouldn't repay a single penny to anyone who calls a morté a mortar. (Trans. J. Henderson)

6. Scholion on *Iliad* 21.240 [*Pap. Oxy.* II p.68 col. XII 20]: “a terrible churning wave rose up around Achilles...” Protagoras says that the following episode, the battle between Xanthus and a mortal, serves to punctuate the battle, in order to make a transition to the battle between the gods; and perhaps also to amplify the status of Achilles.

δεινὸν δ' ἀ[μ]φ' Ἀχι[λ]λῆα κυκ[λ]ώμενον ἴστατο κῶ[μ]α·
Πρωταγόρας φησὶ πρὸς τὸ διαλαβεῖν τὴν μάχην τὸ ἐ[π]εισόδιον γερονέαι τὸ ἐξῆς τῆς Ξά[ν]θου κα[ὶ] θνητοῦ μάχης,
ἴν' εἰς τὴν θεομ[αχία]ν μεταβῆ<ι>· τάχα δὲ ἴνα καὶ τὸν [Ἀχιλ.]λέ[α] ἀυξήσῃ<ι> καὶ προκαταπονήσ[ας] τοῖς
προ[τέρ]οις κινδύνοις ποιήσῃ<ι> [αὐτὸν]ς καταλαμβάνοντα τὸ [πεδίο]ν. ἐπ[ὶ]ήδα δὲ οὐκ ἐν τῶ<ι> ρείθρω<ι> [ἔτι,
ἀλλ' ἐν τ]ῶ<ι> πεδίοι. (ed. Erbse)

7. Aristotle, *Poet.* 23 1459a35-38: As it is, Homer took one part of the war and used used many episodes from other parts, such as the catalogue of ships, and he punctuates his poem with other episodes. But other poets write about one person or time or action, but in many parts, like the author of the *Cypria* or of the *Little Iliad*.

νῦν δ' ἐν μέρος ἀπολαβῶν ἐπεισοδίοις <Ὀμηρος> κέχρηται αὐτῶν πολλοῖς, οἷον νεῶν καταλόγῳ καὶ ἄλλοις ἐπεισοδίοις [δῖς] διαλαμβάνει τὴν ποίησιν. οἱ δ' ἄλλοι περὶ ἓνα ποιοῦσι καὶ περὶ ἓνα χρόνον καὶ μίαν πρᾶξιν πολυμερῆ, οἷον ὁ τὰ Κύπρια ποιήσας καὶ τὴν μικρὰν Ἰλιάδα.

8.a. Protagoras 346c: So I “praise and love” – note that he uses the Mytilenian dialect here, since he’s aiming at Pittacus with his point that “I give my praise and love willingly” – the **pause** in the line should go here, after “willingly” – “any man who does nothing shameful”, while there are other people who I praise and love unwillingly.

ὡς ἐγὼ πάντας “φιλέω καὶ ἐπαίνημι”—καὶ τῇ φωνῇ ἐνταῦθα κέχρηται τῇ τῶν Μυτιληναίων, ὡς πρὸς Πιττακὸν λέγων τὸ “πάντας δὲ ἐπαίνημι καὶ φιλέω ἐκόν”—ἐνταῦθα δεῖ ἐν τῷ ἐκόν διαλαβεῖν λέγοντα—“ὅστις ἔρδη μὴδὲν αἰσχρόν”, ἄκων δ' ἔστιν οὐς ἐγὼ ἐπαινῶ καὶ φιλῶ.

8.b. Simonides fr. 542 27-29: πάντας δ' ἐπαίνημι καὶ φιλέω So long as he does
ἐκόν ὅστις ἔρδηι nothing shameful willingly I give
μηδὲν αἰσχρόν· my praise and love to any man.

9. Simonides fr. 542 lines 1-3 vs. lines 11-14

For a man it’s hard truly to become good (1) ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἀλαθέως γενέσθαι
—perfect in hands, feet, and mind, (3) χαλεπὸν χερσίν τε καὶ ποσὶ καὶ νόωι
built without a single flaw. (3) τετράγωνον ἄνευ ψόγου τετυγμένον·

vs.

vs.

But for me that saying of Pittacus doesn’t ring true (even though he was a wise guy): (11) οὐδέ μοι ἐμμελέως τὸ Πιττάκειον
he says “it is hard to be noble”; (14) νέμεται, καίτοι σοφοῦ παρὰ φωτὸς εἰ-
only a god can have that prize... (14) -ρημένον· χαλεπὸν φάτ' ἔσθλον ἔμμεναι.
θεὸς ἂν μόνος τοῦτ' ἔχει γέρας...

10. Protagoras 339c-d: Prot: So are these lines consistent with the earlier ones? **Soc:** I think so (although I was rather worried that he might be on to something), but do you not think so? **Prot:** How (339d) could I think he is consistent in both parts, given that he starts out by laying it down that it is hard to become a good man in truth, while a bit later on in the poem he forgets that and, when Pittacus says the same thing as himself – that it’s hard to be noble – he criticizes him and says he can’t accept it, even though he’s saying the same thing as himself. And yet when he criticizes someone saying the same thing as himself, it’s clear that he is criticizing himself as well; as a result, he’s incorrect either in the earlier or the later lines.

Δοκεῖ οὖν σοι, ἔφη, ταῦτα ἐκείνοις ὁμολογεῖσθαι; — Φαίνεται ἔμοιγε (καὶ ἅμα μέντοι ἐφοβούμην μὴ τι λέγοι) ἀτάρ, ἔφη, ἐγὼ, σοὶ οὐ φαίνεται; — Πῶς γὰρ ἂν (339d) φαίνοιτο ὁμολογεῖν αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ὅ ταῦτα ἀμφοτέρω λέγων, ὅς γε τὸ μὲν πρῶτον αὐτὸς ὑπέθετο χαλεπὸν εἶναι ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι ἀλαθείᾳ, ὀλίγον δὲ τοῦ ποιήματος εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν προελθὼν ἐπελάθετο, καὶ Πιττακὸν τὸν ταῦτα λέγοντα ἑαυτῷ, ὅτι χαλεπὸν ἔσθλον ἔμμεναι, τοῦτον μέμφεται τε καὶ οὐ φησιν ἀποδέχεσθαι αὐτοῦ τὰ αὐτὰ ἑαυτῷ λέγοντος; καίτοι ὅποτε τὸν ταῦτα λέγοντα αὐτῷ μέμφεται, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ ἑαυτὸν μέμφεται, ὥστε ἦτοι τὸ πρότερον ἢ ὕστερον οὐκ ὀρθῶς λέγει.

11. Protagoras 340b-d: ‘Take a look now and see if you agree with me, Prodicus, since it’s not clear to me that Simonides contradicts himself. Give us your opinion: do you think becoming and being are the same or different?’ ‘Different, by god,’ Prodicus said. ‘So Simonides set out his own opinion in the first lines,’ I said, ‘that (340c) it’s hard for a man in truth to **become** good?’ ‘That’s right,’ Prodicus said. ‘Whereas he criticizes Pittacus,’ I said, ‘not as Protagoras thinks for saying the same thing as himself, but for saying something else. For Pittacus didn’t say that what is hard is becoming noble, as Simonides did, but **being** it. But the two are not the same, Protagoras, being and becoming – so Prodicus here says. Yet if being isn’t the same as becoming, Simonides doesn’t contradict himself. And perhaps Prodicus here would say, like many other people, (340d) with Hesiod [in *Works and Days* 289-91] that it is hard to become good: “for the gods have put sweat on the route to virtue”, but that “once one reaches its heights, it is easy thereafter, hard though it was” to acquire it.’

καὶ νῦν σκόπει εἴ σοι συνδοκεῖ ὄπερ ἐμοί. οὐ γὰρ φαίνεται ἐναντία λέγειν αὐτὸς αὐτῷ Σιμωνίδης. σὺ γάρ, ὦ Πρόδικε, προαπόφηναι τὴν σὴν γνώμην· ταῦτόν σοι δοκεῖ εἶναι τὸ γενέσθαι καὶ τὸ εἶναι, ἢ ἄλλο; Ἄλλο νῆ Δί', ἔφη ὁ Πρόδικος. Οὐκοῦν, ἔφη ἐγώ, ἐν μὲν τοῖς πρώτοις αὐτὸς ὁ Σιμωνίδης τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην ἀπεφώνησε, ὅτι ἄνδρα (340c.) ἀγαθὸν ἀληθείᾳ γενέσθαι χαλεπὸν εἶη; Ἀληθῆ λέγεις, ἔφη ὁ Πρόδικος. Τὸν δέ γε Πιττακόν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, μέμφεται, οὐχ ὡς οἶεται Πρωταγόρας, ταῦτόν ἑαυτῷ λέγοντα, ἀλλ' ἄλλο. οὐ γὰρ τοῦτο ὁ Πιττακὸς ἔλεγε τὸ χαλεπὸν, γενέσθαι ἐσθλόν, ὡσπερ ὁ Σιμωνίδης, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἔμμεναι· ἔστιν δὲ οὐ ταῦτόν, ὦ Πρωταγόρα, ὡς φησιν Πρόδικος ὅδε, τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ γενέσθαι. εἰ δὲ μὴ τὸ αὐτὸ ἔστιν τὸ εἶναι τῷ γενέσθαι, οὐκ ἐναντία λέγει ὁ Σιμωνίδης αὐτὸς αὐτῷ. καὶ ἴσως ἂν φαίη Πρόδικος ὅδε καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ (340d.) καθ' Ἡσίοδον γενέσθαι μὲν ἀγαθὸν χαλεπὸν εἶναι—τῆς γὰρ ἀρετῆς ἔμπροσθεν τοὺς θεοὺς ἰδρωτὰ θεῖναι—ὅταν δὲ τις αὐτῆς εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηται, ῥηϊδίην δῆπειτα πέλειν, χαλεπήν περ ἐοῦσαν, ἐκτῆσθαι.

12. *Protagoras* 341b-d: ‘Perhaps it’s the same for the Ceans and Simonides, so they take ‘hard’ to mean ‘bad’ or something else you don’t understand. Let’s ask Prodicus – he’s the right person to ask about Simonides’ dialect. What did Simonides mean (341c) by ‘hard’, Prodicus?’ ‘Bad,’ he said. ‘So that’s why he criticized Pittacus for saying it’s hard to be noble: it’s as if he had heard him saying that it’s bad to be noble.’ ‘What else do you think Simonides meant, Socrates, but to shame Pittacus for not knowing how to analyze words correctly, because he was from Lesbos and was brought up speaking a barbarous dialect?’ ‘Well, Protagoras,’ I said, ‘you heard Prodicus. (341d) Do you have any response to his view?’ ‘It’s very far from the truth, Prodicus,’ Protagoras said. ‘I’m quite certain that Simonides meant by ‘hard’ what the rest of us do, that is, not bad, but what is not easy but comes about through a lot of effort.’ ‘That’s what I think Simonides meant as well,’ I said, ‘and Prodicus here knows it too – he’s joking and seems to be testing you to see if you can come to the aid of your position.’

ἴσως οὖν καὶ τὸ “χαλεπὸν” αὖ οἱ Κεῖοι καὶ ὁ Σιμωνίδης ἢ κακὸν ὑπολαμβάνουσι ἢ ἄλλο τι ὃ σὺ οὐ μανθάνεις· ἐρώμεθα οὖν Πρόδικον—δίκαιον γὰρ τὴν Σιμωνίδου φωνὴν τοῦτον ἐρωτᾶν—τί ἔλεγε, ὦ Πρόδικε, τὸ (341c.) “χαλεπὸν” Σιμωνίδης; Κακόν, ἔφη. Διὰ ταῦτ' ἄρα καὶ μέμφεται, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὦ Πρόδικε, τὸν Πιττακὸν λέγοντα χαλεπὸν ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι, ὡσπερ ἂν εἴηκουεν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι ἔστιν κακὸν ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι. Ἀλλὰ τί οἶει, ἔφη, λέγειν, ὦ Σώκратες, Σιμωνίδην ἄλλο ἢ τοῦτο, καὶ ὀνειδίξειν τῷ Πιττακῷ ὅτι τὰ ὀνόματα οὐκ ἠπίστατο ὀρθῶς διαίρειν ἅτε Λέσβιος ὢν καὶ ἐν φωνῇ βαρβάρῳ τεθραμμένος; Ἀκούεις δὴ, ἔφη ἐγώ, ὦ Πρωταγόρα, Προδίκου τοῦδε. (341d.) ἔχεις τι πρὸς ταῦτα λέγειν; Καὶ ὁ Πρωταγόρας, Πολλοῦ γε δεῖ, ἔφη, οὕτως ἔχειν, ὦ Πρόδικε· ἀλλ' ἐγὼ εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ Σιμωνίδης τὸ “χαλεπὸν” ἔλεγε ὅπερ ἡμεῖς οἱ ἄλλοι, οὐ τὸ κακόν, ἀλλ' ὃ ἂν μὴ ῥάδιον ἢ ἄλλα διὰ πολλῶν πραγμάτων γίγνηται. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐγὼ οἶμαι, ἔφη, ὦ Πρωταγόρα, τοῦτο λέγειν Σιμωνίδην, καὶ Πρόδικόν γε τόνδε εἰδέναι, ἀλλὰ παίζειν καὶ σοῦ δοκεῖν ἀποπειράσθαι εἰ οἷός τ' ἔση τῷ σαυτοῦ λόγῳ βοηθεῖν.

13. Table showing Socrates’ method as applied to line one of Simonides’ poem

1	2	3	4	5	6		a	b	c	d
ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἀλαθέως γενέσθαι χαλεπὸν (line 1)						vs.	Not:			χαλεπὸν φάτ' ἐσθλὸν ἔμμεναι (line 13)
For a man ¹ truly ⁴ to become ⁵ good ² is hard ⁶						vs.	Not:			it is hard ^a he says ^b to be ^d noble ^c
word 5: γενέσθαι/‘become’	= get (acc. Hesiod)					= be (Protagoras)				= be temporarily (Socrates)
vs.										
word d: ἔμμεναι/‘be’	= retain (contrast)					= be (contradiction)				= be permanently (contrast)
word 6: χαλεπὸν/‘hard’	= hard (Prodicus)					= hard (Protagoras)				= hard (Socrates)
vs.										
word a: χαλεπὸν/‘hard’	= bad (contrast)					= hard (contradiction)				= impossible (contrast)
word 3: μὲν (antithetical)	= γενέσθαι μὲν to become...					= ἄνδρ' μὲν for a man...				= ἄνδρ' ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἀλαθέως a truly good man...
contrasts with:	to be (line 13)					for a god... (line 14)				a middling person (line 36)
word 4: ἀλαθέως /‘truly’	= ἀγαθὸν ἀλαθέως really good					= χαλεπὸν ἀλαθέως truly (sentential operator)				= ἀλαθέως γενέσθαι really succeed in becoming
and so modifies:	word 2					word 6				word 5

14. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1126...1196

Αι. **“Ερμῆ χθόνιε, πατρῶ’ ἐποπτεύων κράτη, σωτήρ γενοῦ μοι σύμμαχος τ’ αἰτουμένω. ἦκω γὰρ εἰς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι.”**
 Δι. τούτων ἔχεις ψέγειν τι; Εὔ. πλεῖν ἢ δώδεκα.
 Δι. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ πάντα ταῦτά γ’ ἔστ’ ἀλλ’ ἢ τρία.
 Εὔ. ἔχει δ’ ἕκαστον εἰκοσὶν γ’ ἁμαρτίας.

Αι. **“Ερμῆ χθόνιε, πατρῶ’ ἐποπτεύων κράτη.”**
 Εὔ. οὐκουν Ὀρέστης τοῦτ’ ἐπὶ τῷ τύμβῳ λέγει τῷ τοῦ πατρὸς τεθνεώτος; Αἰ. οὐκ ἄλλως λέγω.
 Εὔ. πότερ’ οὖν τὸν Ερμῆν, ὡς ὁ πατήρ ἀπόλετο αὐτοῦ βιαίως ἐκ γυναικειᾶς χειρὸς δόλοισι λαθραίοις, ταῦτ’ “ἐποπτεύειν” ἔφη;
 Αἰ. οὐ δῆτ’ ἐκεῖνος, ἀλλὰ τὸν Ἐριούνιον Ἐρμῆν χθόνιον προσεῖπε, κάδιήλου λέγων ὅτι πατρῶν τοῦτο κέκτηται γέρας—
 Εὔ. ἔτι μεῖζον ἐξήμαρτες ἢ γῶ βουλόμην· εἰ γὰρ πατρῶν τὸ χθόνιον ἔχει γέρας—
 Δι. οὐτὸ γ’ ἂν εἴη πρὸς πατρὸς τυμβωρύχος.
 Αἰ. Διόνυσε, πίνεις οἶνον οὐκ ἀνθοσμῖαν.

Αι. **“σωτήρ γενοῦ μοι σύμμαχος τ’ αἰτουμένω. ἦκω γὰρ εἰς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι.”**
 Εὔ. δις ταυτὸν ἡμῖν εἶπεν ὁ σοφὸς Αἰσχύλος.
 Δι. πῶς δις;
 Εὔ. σκόπει τὸ ῥῆμ’· ἐγὼ δέ σοι φράσω. “ἦκω γὰρ εἰς γῆν,” φησί, “καὶ κατέρχομαι.” “ἦκω” δὲ ταυτὸν ἐστὶ τῷ “κατέρχομαι”.
 Δι. νῆ τὸν Δί’, ὡσπερ γ’ εἰ τις εἶποι γείτοني, “χρησον σύ μάκτραν, εἰ δὲ βούλει, κάρδοπον.”
 Αἰ. οὐ δῆτα τοῦτό γ’, ὃ κατεστωμυλμένε ἄνθρωπε, ταῦτ’ ἔστ’, ἀλλ’ ἄριστ’ ἐπῶν ἔχον.
 Δι. πῶς δὴ; δίδαξον γὰρ με καθ’ ὅτι δὴ λέγεις;
 Αἰ. ἔλθεῖν μὲν εἰς γῆν ἔσθ’ ὅτω μετῆ πάτρας· χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν· φεύγων δ’ ἀνὴρ ἦκει· τε καὶ κατέρχεται’.
 Δι. εὔ, νῆ τὸν Απόλλω. τί σύ λέγεις, Εὐριπίδη;
 Εὔ. οὐ φημι τὸν Ὀρέστην κατελθεῖν οἴκαδε· λάθρα γὰρ ἦλθεν, οὐ πιθῶν τοὺς κυρίου.
 Δι. εὔ, νῆ τὸν Ερμῆν· ὃ τι λέγεις δ’ οὐ μανθάνω.

Εὔ. **“ἦν Οἰδίπους τὸ πρῶτον εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ”**—
 Αἰ. μὰ τὸν Δί’ οὐ δῆτ’, ἀλλὰ κακοδαίμων φύσει. ὄντινά γε πρὶν φύνα μὲν Απόλλων ἔφη ἀποκτενεῖν τὸν πατέρα πρὶν καὶ γεγονέναι· πῶς οὗτος ἦν τὸ πρῶτον εὐτυχῆς ἀνὴρ;

Εὔ. **“εἴτ’ ἐγένετ’ αὐθις ἀθλιώτατος βροτῶν.”**
 Αἰ. μὰ τὸν Δί’ οὐ δῆτ’, οὐ μὲν οὖν ἐπαύσατο. πῶς γάρ; ὅτε δὴ πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸν γενόμενον χειμῶνος ὄντος ἐξέθεσαν ἐν ὀστράκῳ, ἵνα μὴ ἵκτραφείς γένοιτο τοῦ πατρὸς φονεὺς· εἴθ’ ὡς Πόλυβον ἤρρησεν οἰδῶν τῷ πόδε· ἔπειτα γραῦν ἔγημεν αὐτὸς ὦν νέος καὶ πρὸς γε τούτοις τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα· εἴτ’ ἐξετύφλωσεν αὐτόν.
 Δι. εὐδαίμων ἄρ’ ἦν, εἰ κάστρατήγησεν γε μετ’ Ἐρασινίδου.

(*Trans.* J. Henderson, with minor revisions.)

A: “Underworld Hermes, who keeps watch over the paternal domain, be now, I pray, my ally and savior, for I’ve come back to this land and return.”
 D: Do you have any criticism of that? E: A dozen or so.
 D: But the whole quote is only three lines long!
 E: And each one contains twenty mistakes.
 A: “Underworld Hermes, who keeps watch over the paternal domain.” E: Now doesn’t Orestes say this at the tomb of his dead father? A: That’s right.
 E: So let me get this right: after his father had died violently at his wife’s hands in a secret plot, he was saying that Hermes “kept watch” as this happened?
 A: He was not! He called on Nether Hermes as “Underworld Hermes” and made it clear that Hermes possesses this function as a paternal inheritance.
 E: That’s an even bigger mistake than I was looking for! Because if he possesses the underworlds as a paternal inheritance— D: That would make him a graverobber on his father’s side!
 A: Dionysus, the wine you’re drinking has gone sour.
 A: “Be now, I pray, my ally and savior, for I’ve come back to this land and return.”
 E: The sage Aeschylus has told us the same thing twice.
 D: How twice?
 E: Look at the expression, and I’ll show you. “I’ve come back to this land,” he says, “and return”; but “coming back to” is the same as “returning.”
 D: Of course! It’s like asking your neighbor, “Lend me a kneading trough, or else a mortar to knead in!”
 A: That is not the same thing, you fool for folderol! The wording is excellent.
 D: How so? Explain to me what you mean by that.
 A: Anyone who belongs to a country can “come back” to it; he just arrives without any further circumstance. But an exile both “comes back” and “returns.”
 D: Very good, by Apollo! What do you say Euripides?
 E: I deny that Orestes was “returning” home; he arrived secretly and without informing the authorities.
 D: Very good, by Hermes, though I don’t know what you mean.
 E: “At first Oedipus was a happy man—“
 A: He certainly was not; he was born unhappy, seeing that he’s the one who, even before his birth, Apollo said would kill his father—before he was even conceived! So how could he be “at first a lucky man”?
 E: “but then he became the wretchedest of mortals.”
 A: Certainly not “became”, by heaven, because he never stopped being that, did he? Considering that as a newborn they put him in a pot & exposed him in the dead of winter, so he wouldn’t become his father’s murderer when he grew up; then he wandered off on two swollen feet to Polybus; then as a young man he married an old lady; and on top of that she was his own mother; and then he blinded himself.
 D: Yes, a happy man, provided he also shared command with Erasinides!

Appendix

15. *Protagoras* 339e-40a: When Protagoras said this he caused a real stir and a lot of praise from the audience. As for me, at first my eyes darkened and my head *spun as if I'd been punched by a good boxer*, at his speech and the racket made by the others. Afterwards – and to tell you the truth, in order to gain time to investigate what the poet meant – I turned to Prodicus and, calling on him, said “Prodicus, Simonides is a fellow-citizen of yours, after all, (340a) so it’s right for you to come to his aid. So I’ve decided to summon you in aid. Just as Homer says the river Scamander called on Simoeis when he was under siege by Achilles, saying:

My dear brother, let us both together resist the might of this man [*Iliad* 21.308-9] so I too summon you in aid to prevent Protagoras from storming Simonides. And in fact the defense of Simonides needs your artistry – the art by which you distinguish wanting and desiring as well as the many other nice cases you gave us just now.”

Εἰπὼν οὖν ταῦτα πολλοῖς θόρυβον παρέσχεν καὶ ἔπαινον τῶν ἀκούοντων· καὶ ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον, ὡς περὶ ὑπὸ ἀγαθοῦ πύκτου πληγεῖς, ἐσκοτώθην τε καὶ ἰλιγγίασα εἰπόντος αὐτοῦ ταῦτα καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιθορυβησάντων· ἔπειτα—ὡς γε πρὸς σέ εἰρησθαι τάληθῆ, ἵνα μοι χρόνος ἐγγένηται τῇ σκέψει τί λέγοι ὁ ποιητής—τρέπομαι πρὸς τὸν Πρόδικον, καὶ καλέσας αὐτόν, ὃ Πρόδικε, ἔφην ἐγώ, σὸς μέντοι Σιμωνίδης πολίτης· (340a) δίκαιος εἶ βοηθεῖν τῷ ἀνδρὶ. δοκῶ οὖν μοι ἐγὼ παρακαλεῖν σέ· ὡς περ ἔφη Ὀμηρος τὸν Σκάμανδρον πολιορκούμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀχιλλεύου τὸν Σιμόεντα παρακαλεῖν, εἰπόντα—

φίλε κασίγνητε, σθένος ἀνέρος ἀμφοτέροί περ / σχῶμεν,
ἀτὰρ καὶ ἐγὼ σέ παρακαλῶ, μὴ ἡμῖν ὁ Πρωταγόρας τὸν Σιμωνίδην ἐκπέρσῃ. καὶ γὰρ οὖν καὶ δεῖται τὸ ὑπὲρ Σιμωνίδου ἐπανόρθωμα τῆς σῆς μουσικῆς, ἧ τὸ τε βούλεσθαι καὶ ἐπιθυμεῖν διαιρεῖς ὡς οὐ ταῦτὸν ὄν, καὶ ἃ νυνδὴ εἶπες πολλά τε καὶ καλά.

16. *Dissoi Logoi* ch. 6.10-12 (counters to 4th and 5th arguments that wisdom and virtue are not teachable):

(10) The fourth point is valid only if those in question do not become wise after associating with skilled sophists. <I say skilled> because a lot of people do not learn their letters, even though they have taken a course in them. (11) There is also an important natural talent whereby a person becomes capable – without having learned his competence from sophists – of comprehending the greater part of a subject with ease – provided he is also naturally well-endowed – after learning <only> a small part of it from those from whom we also learn words. And some of these latter things (be it a greater or smaller number) one person learns from his father and another from his mother. (12) And if someone is not convinced that we learn our words, but feels sure we are born knowing them, let him ascertain the truth from the following evidence: should a person send a child to Persia immediately it was born and have it brought up there without ever hearing the speech of Greece, the child would speak Persian; should one bring the child from Persia to Greece, the child would speak Greek. That is the way we learn words, and we do not know who it was who taught us. (*Trans.* Robinson)

(10) τέταρτον δέ, αἰ μὴ τοι παρὰ [σοφῶν] σοφιστῶν σοφοὶ γίνονται· καὶ γὰρ γράμματα πολλοὶ οὐκ ἔμαθον μαθόντες. (11) ἔστι δέ τι καὶ φύσις, αἱ δὲ τις μὴ μαθῶν παρὰ σοφιστῶν ἱκανὸς ἐγένετο, εὐφυῆς γὰρ γενόμενος, ῥαϊδίως συναρπάξαι τὰ πολλά, ὀλίγα μαθῶν παρ’ ὧν περ καὶ τῶν ὀνόματα μανθάνομεν· καὶ τούτων τι ἦτοι πλέον, ἦτοι ἔλασσον, ὁ μὲν παρὰ πατρός, ὁ δὲ παρὰ ματρός. (12) αἰ δέ τοι μὴ πιστόν ἐστι τὰ ὀνόματα μανθάνειν ἀμέ, ἀλλ’ ἐπισταμένως ἅμα γίνεσθαι, γνῶτω ἐκ τῶνδε· αἶ τις εὐθύς γενόμενον παιδίον ἐς Πέρσας ἀποπέμψαι καὶ τῆν εἰ τράφοι, κωφὸν Ἑλλάδος φωνᾶς, περσίζοι κα· αἶ τις τῆν ὀθεν τῆνδε κομίζαι, ἔλλανίζοι κα. οὕτω μανθάνομεν τὰ ὀνόματα, καὶ τῶς διδασκάλως οὐκ ἴσαμες.